

#### ILLUSION AND THE REALITIES OF FARM LIFE

(Written Specially for The Bulletin.)

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"Machinery instead of drudgery, wience instead of guess-work—that's farming in 1912." I quote from one of those excessively optimistic persons whose aim seems to be to delude simple city folk into the idea that farming is one life-long picnic.

You'd think to read some of the stuff, that all the farmer has to do is to press the button" and let gasoline engines and dynamos do the rest.

You'd think that his chief occupation was to pass out bunches and bushels and bags full of produce to eager consumers swarming at his back door, all with baskets in one hand and bills in the other.

You and I ,who are in and of it, know that "tain't no sech thing." More-over, we know that these well-meaning boomers of country life, who minimize the toti and magnify the rewards of farming are doing more harm than good. They are building up false hopes which are certain of extinction in the first cold wind of actual ex-

They are urging innocently ignorant people to loss which they can't afford and to unhappiness which no one can afford.

For a long course of years the ten-dency of writers was to pity or sneer at the farmer. He was caricatured in type and picture. He was held up as an example of dunderheadedness, of alowness of hand-to-mouth existence. The whole world of books and papers was filled with the explicit or im-plied idea that farming was a "low-down" business and that the farmer was only one little step higher than a pauper.

Then, twenty or so years ago, there came a change, From unjust depreciation of farm life the pen and pencil shovers pranced over to the opposite side of the arena and suddenly became vociferous boomers for it.

As they went to the extreme in the As they went to the extreme in the old days of risicule and curricature, so they are going to extremes, now.

Farming len't all "machinery instead of drudgery." Nor is it all "science instead of guess-work."

I've just come in from a morning tour of five acres of gardens. For twenty years I've been living with those five acres. I've summered them and wintered them. I've had their soil analysed and I've tried them out in all sous of practice. I know what forms of plant-food are present in them in ample supply and what are stinted. I know what analysis and experience both tell me are suitable areas for cabbage and for corn and for asparagins and for green pens. etc., etc. asparagiis and for green peas, etc., etc. I know what analysis and experience dictate as the most adequate and economical methods of supplying deficiencies. In other words, I'm farm-

Well, to begin with, there are about three acres of corn and beans and potatoes, a large part of which are cither killed or sadly hurt by the four frosts which this "rare June" has, thus far, shook out of its ice-box over my is "talking through his hat."

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Pinkham's Vegetable omnound. I am recom-endingittoallmy friends scause of what it has one for me. "-Mrs. Chas. SAUER, 523 E. Marion St., dishawaka, Ind.

mpound made me well and I want other suffering women to know about it. Mrs. Emma Bailey, Alton Station, Ky.

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"Science" never gave me a hint of suggestion, when I was planting those crops in May, that we were to have a reorudescence of winter in June. A little old-fashioned "guess-work" did enable me to save a few hundred tomato and pepper plants by hasty recourse to box and bran-bag covers. But eyen they are looking more or less sickly, have lost the cheerful hope-fulness which they showed when first set out into a too cold world.

In my truck patch, the rows of let-tuce are thick and of fair color. But the rows of spinsch, just beside them, show only here and there a plant, Dit-to with the beets. While every lettuce seed sown seems to have germinated and lived. A little radish seed, sown early under glass, came up finely and grew into handsome radishes. The rest rest of the half-pound, sown in the rest of the half-pound, sown in the open at the proper time and in ground analytically and experimentally shown suitable for radishes, hasn't produced a single plant. A very few tiny leaves have appeared at intervals only to be eaten off instantly by the turnip flea-

Green peas, which started promisingly, have been standing still for the last two or three weeks. Two years ago began picking for market on June 12. This year, there wasn't a "slat" ped an inch long visible on the vines June 12. The larger vines are barely holding their own: half-a-dozen long rows of smaller ones, planted for late grop, are turning yellow and wittercrop, are turning yellow and wilter

ng. Early set cabbage plants are dying by the dozen, apparently for no reason except that they're too discouraged

In my seed-bods cauliflower and celery have either refused to germinate or have been destroyed by some mysor have been destroyed by some mysterious blight or bacterium before fairly breaking the soil. Those which have managed to get their heads above ground stubbornly refuse to grow any further. In three seed-beds, two under cheese-cloth and one in the open, I may have a thousand or two celery plants still alive. They have been up three weeks or more and the biggest of them may be an inch high, now. At present rates of progress, it looks as if some or them might become settable by September. Though I don't want to be over-sanguine about that! be over-sanguine about that!

and rankly. Of my meion hills a single sickly stem is visible in about one out

In other words, I'm farming those five acres by "acience instead of guess-work."

Also, I have all the machinery that is economically wise for such a garden.

What does my morning tour of inspection tell me of the results of thus farming with machinery instead of drudgery and with science instead of guess-work?

Now I haven't been telling you all this to whimper over or snivel about. Nor to bespeak your sympathy. Thank you, I'm not in the market for that, either. It is simply to suggest to you. from the one experience which is closest to me and which I can write about most intelligently, that old Step-mother Nature is still on the job, and that neither machinery nor science has yet for

an unusually vigorous irruption of bacterial and insect pests. Science wasn't able to forewarn us of it, nor has she any practical formulae by which we may overcome it. Nor is there any cure in "machinery." We still have to take the weather as it comes and the seasons as they co.

the seasons as they go.

Generally Nature is fairly good to
us, -kinder than our fellow-beings, the
middlemen, anyway. Ours isn't the
only calling which has its bad years. We can all remember times when business men were going into bankruptcy like panic-stricken sheep into a ditch years when banks by the hundreds had to close their doors and liquidate. Take it "by and large" our business is the steadlest and surest there is, with the least risk and the rarest threat of failure. But all risk and all danger of failure have not yet been eliminated from it. We still have to take our hances, sometimes to take pretty slim

Yet there are compensations for us even in defeat. You remember the scared lady aboard ship in a night storm who begged to be allowed a light in her cabin, because six didn't want "te drown in the dark." If we've got to meet disaster i, for one, would rather meet it out in the open fields rather meet it out in the open fields and the wide country than in a stuffy store or office or factory. There's something in having plenty of room to fight in,—or to run, if one has to' I don't want to be driven up a tree, but, if the bears come, I like to know that there are a few trees in sight, up one of which I might scramble if that compound. I am recomstorm who begged to be allowed

We haven't yet reached the point where we can discount all the evils of the universe, nor cure all its alls. Alton Station, Ky. "For months I suffered from troubles in consequence of my aga and thought I could not live. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable ather in farming on in any other voca want untrained an dincompetent men cajoled into taking up the work through unduly rose-colored pictures of utopian impossibilities. It is the unexpected which happens: and it is last as likely to happen up here on Podunk Heights as on Main street or Fourth avenue. THE FARMER.

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(Continued from Page 11.)

are awarded fairly in these modern times but that fairness did not preval in every instance in the long ago. There is a case in point for illustration.

Many years ago, just forty-four to be exact, at the first session of the first evening school in New London, there was a spelling contest among the students. students the prize being a Webster Unabridged Dictionary. Towards the and of the term the contest took place, consisting of forty words. Three of the pupils were perfect in the correct and it was continued until the next evening. One of the contesting trio was a cripple and naturally sympathy was with him and even his associate contestants would not have wept to have him declared the winner, but they had no desire to belittle their own efficiency and came the next pight. efficiency, and came the next night prepared to win the honor if possible It was to be another contest with forty words as the limit. Before the contest began one of the nosey pupil nessiy inscribed on the fly leaf that the book knowledge had been awarded to the crippid young man for proficiency in spelling. The other two contestants did not want to protest and had no desire to create any feeling.

They agreed to spell incorrectly the nform the committee that they wer onto the game. The three pupils wer-lined up and the contest opened. The first word was given out, missed and that contestant was out of the race. The same game was played by his wise associate and the boy with his name in the book was the only con testant standing. He of course spell ed the word correctly and the prize was promptly awarded. Then there was brief session of the committeeme and they spoke in words of prais-of the efforts of the defeated contest ants and as sort of healing plaster pre-sented to each a two years' member stip in the New London Library as asparagus and chickweed seem to be doing finely. For the rest my gardens resemble a vegetable hospital.

sociation, which was located in the direction on the third floor of the resemble a vegetable hospital.

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highway commissioner.

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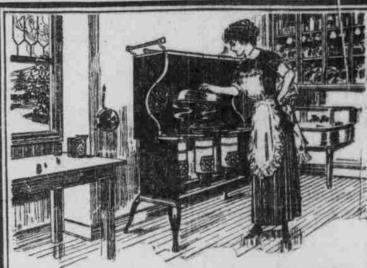
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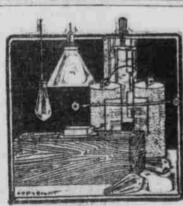
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